

# CROSSECTION



Winter

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## TREE SALE IN PROGRESS



We are currently taking orders for the 2008 Tree Seedling Sale. If you have misplaced your order form, call our office at 440-350-2730 to request one, or download it from [www.lakecountyohio.org/soil/treesale.htm](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/soil/treesale.htm).

**Please note:** the pick-up dates listed in the Fall 2007 CrosSection were incorrect. Trees should be picked up at Lake County Fairgrounds on April 18th between 9 am and 6 pm or April 19th between 9 am and noon. The deadline for orders is February 25th.



## CONSERVATION EASEMENTS ON CAPITOL HILL

DAN DONALDSON, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

On January 1, 2008, an important conservation easement tax incentive expired. It had provided significant federal income tax reductions to landowners who preserved their land with a conservation easement. New replacement legislation inserted into the Farm Bill that will make the tax cut permanent was passed in the Senate but was not present in the House Bill. The conservation easement tax incentive will now need to be worked out in conference.

A conservation easement (or conservation restriction) is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a government agency or land trust that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. It allows you to continue to own and use your land and to sell it or pass it on to heirs.

When you donate a conservation easement you give up some of the rights associated with the land. For example, you might give up the right to build additional structures, while retaining the right to manage timber on the property. Future owners also will be bound by the easement's terms. The land trust is responsible for making sure the easement's terms are followed.

Conservation easements offer great flexibility. An easement on property containing rare wildlife habitat might prohibit any development,

for example, while one on a farm might allow continued farming and the building of additional agricultural structures. An easement may apply to just a portion of the property, and does not require public access.

A landowner sometimes sells a conservation easement, but usually easements are donated. If the donation benefits the public by permanently protecting important conservation resources and meets other federal tax code requirements--it can qualify as a tax-deductible charitable donation. The amount of the donation is the difference between the land's value with the easement and its value without the easement. Placing an easement on your property may also result in property tax savings.

Perhaps most important, a conservation easement can be essential for passing land on to the next generation. By removing the land's development potential, the easement lowers its market value, which in turn lowers estate tax. Whether the easement is donated during life or by will, it can make a critical difference in the heirs' ability to keep the land intact.

Lake county is fortunate to have several agencies and organizations, including the Lake SWCD that hold conservation easements on private property. Contact us for additional information.

## QUESTIONS ON OIL AND GAS WELL DEVELOPMENT?

DAN DONALDSON, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

In the last couple years Lake County has become one of the most active oil and gas well development counties in the state with over 35 wells drilled last year alone. In September of 2004, Ohio House Bill 278 became law effectively stripping most rights for local communities to regulate drilling for oil and gas. Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Mineral Resource Management was given sole authority to permit, locate and otherwise regulate oil and gas exploration in the State of Ohio.

This action makes a landowner's oil and gas lease all the more important. Lake SWCD has two new brochures that can assist landowners that are considering a gas well on their property. Brochures include a guide for drilling in Lake County and provide landowners with suggested lease language that provides environmental protections while allowing for extraction of these valuable natural resources. Brochures are available at our office, by mail, or at [www.lakecountyohio.org/soil](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/soil).

Lake SWCD also offers on-the-ground technical assistance, in the form of site visits and planning services, to landowners that have or are considering entering into an oil and gas lease.

## MAKE IT FRESH. MAKE IT LOCAL

MAURINE ORNDORFF, AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS TECHNICIAN

You can support our local farm economy by integrating locally grown foods into your home and your diet. To make it easy, we will be letting you know what will be coming into season, where you can purchase it locally, and simple tasty ways to prepare it. Watch this column throughout the year for what to expect from our local farms. Although the snow is still on the ground, there are some early fruits and vegetables that will be here before you know it!

Asparagus and rhubarb, both harbingers of spring, start on May 1 and last into June. You can get asparagus in Madison Township at Wayman's, 2326 Bennett Road (440-428-5922), and at Woodworth Farm, 6401 Middle Ridge Road (440-428-6219). Woodworth Farm also sells rhubarb, greenhouse tomatoes and cucumbers in early May. If you want to start your own rhubarb plants, you can get them at Secor's Nursery in Perry, at 4940 US Route 20 (440-259-3487). You can pick-your-own asparagus and rhubarb in North Perry at Gerlica's, 4860 Lockwood Road (440-259-3444) and asparagus at Rainbow Farms, 2464 Townline Road (440-259-4924). Call ahead for availability!

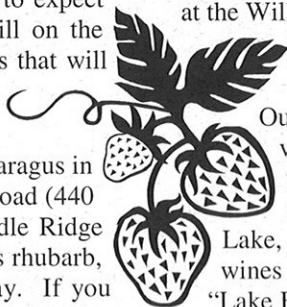
Strawberries, the essence of early summer, are available around the first of June and run through the end of the month. You can

get home grown berries at Secor's and at West Orchards, 3034 North Ridge Road in Perry (440-259-3192), and Rainbow Farms. Some are pick-your-own, and some have ready picked.

Early greens grown by Wood Road Salad Farm will be available at the Willoughby Farmers' Market, which opens on May 3, and at the Painesville Farmer's Market, opening on May 17.

Our northeast Ohio vineyards produce Concord and vinifera grapes which are used by many of our local wineries to make delicious wines. You are sure to find a taste which suits your palate at any of the wineries in Lake, Geauga or Ashtabula counties. Be sure to ask which wines are made with locally grown grapes, or look for a "Lake Erie" or "Grand River Valley" appellation on the label. Another clue to local wines is the term "estate bottled" which means that the grapes were all grown by that vineyard and the winemaking was done on-site. To find a comprehensive listing of regional wineries, go to the Ohio Wine Producers Association website at [www.ohiowines.org](http://www.ohiowines.org).

If you grow fruits and vegetables and would like to be included in our list of producers, please give us a call or e-mail us on our website: [www.lakecountyohio.org/soil](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/soil).



### Fresh Strawberry Salad

Ingredients: 1 pint fresh locally grown strawberries, sliced  
10 oz. of fresh spinach leaves or mixed greens  
1 red onion, thinly sliced

Dressing: ½ cup sugar  
½ cup mayo  
1 cup sour cream  
¼ cup milk  
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar  
2 tablespoons poppy seeds

1. Mix sugar, mayonnaise and sour cream together.
2. Add milk, apple cider vinegar and poppy seeds to mayo mixture. Stir well to dissolve sugar.
3. Top greens with onions and strawberries and dress with dressing.

Recipe adapted from [recipazaar.com](http://recipazaar.com).



### Roasted Asparagus

Ingredients: 1 pound of fresh, locally grown asparagus  
1 ½ tablespoons of olive oil  
½ teaspoon of kosher or table salt

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Rinse spears and snap off the woody bottom part of the asparagus spears and discard.
3. Place asparagus on foil-lined baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil and salt.
4. Roll the asparagus to evenly coat with oil and salt.
5. Roast for 10-15 minutes, until tender when pierced with a knife.

Recipe adapted from [recipazaar.com](http://recipazaar.com).



## SUPPORTING LOCAL AGRICULTURE

MAURINE ORNDORFF, AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS TECHNICIAN

In addition to buying local food, you can support local agriculture in other ways:

- Make a donation to One for the Grape, a vineyard preservation and sustainability program in Northeast Ohio. Your donation will help to purchase agricultural easements on vineyard lands, which will protect them from development for generations to come. With a donation of \$100, you can get a VIP Private Tasting and Vineyard and Cellar Tour for four at one participating winery; by donating \$250, you can get a one-night stay at the Lodge at Geneva State Park. Go to [www.oneforthegrape.com](http://www.oneforthegrape.com) to make an online donation, learn about more perks from the Geneva Lodge, and see the vineyards in the summertime!
- Eat at restaurants that purchase their ingredients from local growers. Five students from Case Western Reserve University are starting a business called Fresh Fork Market. Planned for launch this summer, Fresh Fork Market will operate as a virtual farmers market in the Cleveland area, connecting local growers to local chefs. As a consumer, you will be able to find nearby restaurants that serve locally grown food by going to the website at [www.freshforkmarket.com](http://www.freshforkmarket.com). You can also ask your favorite restaurant or chef to consider serving local produce and recommend that they check out Fresh Fork Market.



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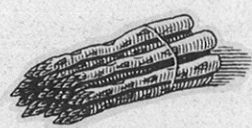


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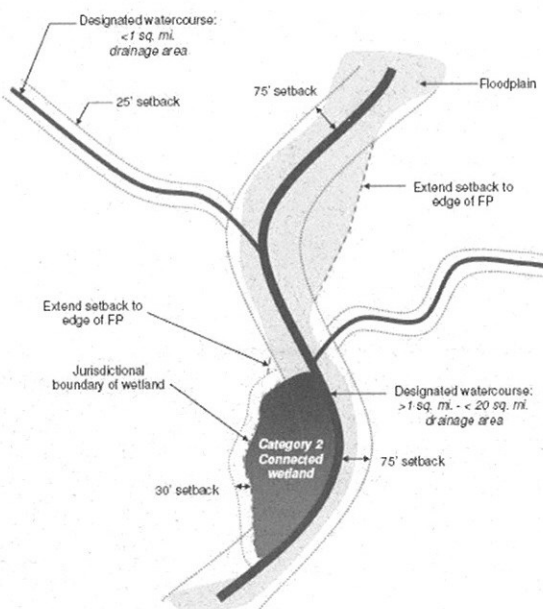
## RIPARIAN SETBACKS

PAUL BOWYER, STORMWATER SPECIALIST

Riparian areas are the naturally vegetated corridors along stream channels, including the flood plain area. When protected and left in their natural state, riparian areas have substantial benefits for both landowners and the community as a whole. Riparian areas serve water-quality functions by reducing flooding severity (by keeping the flood plain in tact), filtering and settling out sediments and pollutants within the flood prone area, and protecting both terrestrial and aquatic habitats. The trees and vegetated cover within these corridors also serve to regulate stream water temperatures by providing shade to the channel. Many aquatic species cannot survive in warm water streams.

Within urbanizing watersheds, protecting riparian areas can also reduce community and landowner costs by keeping structures away from a rapidly changing/eroding and re-sizing stream channel. While stream channels naturally change shape and location slowly over time, streams located in a developing watershed experience dramatically increased rates of channel erosion and change. As the percentage of impervious surface in the watershed increases, storm runoff is increased, causing the streams peak flows to become larger. Concurrently, the streams base flow goes down due to a decrease in rain infiltration and reduced groundwater recharge. Often, the end result is a channel that is enlarging (due to the increase peak flows) and threatening structures that were once perceived to be far enough away from the stream to be safe.

### Riparian Network



In addition to these benefits, establishing riparian setbacks is increasingly being viewed as a near-necessity for a community to maintain compliance with its NPDES Phase II permit requirements. Establishing setbacks provides a community with a proven stormwater quality benefit that helps meet stormwater runoff water quality goals, and requires essentially no capital investment to accomplish.

Currently in Lake County, the communities of Kirtland and Mentor-on-the-Lake have riparian setback ordinances in place. In addition, all new subdivisions in Lake County Townships are subject to setback requirements. Several other Lake County communities are currently considering or are in the process of adopting setback ordinances. A key provision of all of the adopted ordinances is the grandfathering of existing structures that may be within the adopted setback area.

Riparian setback widths are typically set based on the size of the watershed of the stream. Common setback or "buffer" widths range in size from 25ft for small watersheds and streams, up to 120ft or more for larger watersheds. These widths are also based on the typical flood plain or meander widths of a stream.

Whether or not your community has a riparian setback requirement in place, it is important to recognize the significance of protecting and maintaining stream corridors in a natural state. This maintains our stream water quality, keeps flooding in check, and ultimately lowers costs to communities.

## WHAT IS IT? AN UNCOMMON INVERTEBRATE WITH AN IMPORTANT JOB

BETH LANDERS, EDUCATION COORDINATOR



To the left is the Northern Clearwater Crayfish, *Orconectes propinquus*. Most Ohioans recognize a crayfish when they see one; if you are from the south it is a crawdad. This particular species happens to be on Ohio's Species of Concern list. Like most crayfish, this species is a 'shredder' which means that it tears up plant materials such as fallen leaves and algae for its food. This is an important step in the aquatic food chain as it makes nutrients available for smaller organisms that filter feed. If plant material is scarce, crayfish will eat other invertebrates as well as carrion. Stream-dwelling crayfish are sensitive to metals, insecticides and herbicides. These materials can be concentrated in their bodies until they reach toxic levels. An introduced species, the Rusty Crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*) has shown up in the Great Lakes. The Rusty Crayfish is more aggressive than native crayfish, and will displace the natives from their hiding places, leaving them vulnerable to predation.

This crayfish was found in the Grand River.



Return Service Requested



Recycled Paper

### WHO WANTS TO BE A CONSERVATIONIST?

Early signs of spring edition. Suffering from cabin fever? If you know these answers, you'll know that spring is on its way. Work your way though these questions then go out and look for signs of spring!

- 1) Ohio's earliest wildflower lives in wetlands. It is:  
A) Hepatica      C) Skunk Cabbage  
B) Bloodroot      D) Coltsfoot
- 2) Birds call to find mates. Which mating call starts earliest?  
A) Robin      C) Wood duck  
B) Chickadee      D) Great Horned Owl
- 3) Violets come in which of the following colors?  
A) White      C) Yellow  
B) Violet      D) Blue
- 4) Frogs are another harbinger of spring. Place the species in the order they start calling in the spring.  
A) Green Frogs and Bullfrogs      D) Wood Frogs  
B) Spring Peepers      E) Chorus Frogs  
C) American Toads      F) Tree Frogs
- 5) This common spring wildflower is rumored to cure coughs.  
A) Coltsfoot      C) Hepatica  
B) Dandelion      D) Trout Lily
- 6) Spring allergies? The most likely cause is  
A) Grass pollen      C) Shedding wildlife  
B) Tree pollen      D) Algae 'blooms'
- 7) Our State Wildflower is also a spring wildflower. It is:  
A) Ohio Spiderwort      C) Golden-seal  
B) Trillium      D) Wild Columbine

### LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

125 E. Erie St., Painesville, OH 44077

•440-350-2730 (main number) •FAX 440-350-2601

Toll-free •428-4348 ext. 2730 Madison/Perry

•918-2730 Cleveland/Western Lake County

•1-800-899-LAKE ext 2730 outside Lake County only

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 am-4:00 pm

•E-mail: [soil@lakecountyohio.org](mailto:soil@lakecountyohio.org)

•Web site: [www.lakecountyohio.org/soil](http://www.lakecountyohio.org/soil)

PAUL BOWYER, Stormwater Specialist	350-2092
PAM BROWN, District Secretary/Treasurer	350-2041
DAN DONALDSON, District Administrator	350-2030
CHAD EDGAR, Urban Stream Specialist	350-2032
BETH LANDERS, Education/Information Coordinator	350-2033
MAURINE ORNDORFF, Agricultural Programs Technician	350-5863
MATTHEW SCHARVER, Resource Protection Specialist	350-2031
AL BONNIS, District Conservationist, NRCS	437-5888
JOHN NIEDZIALEK, Western Reserve RC&D Coordinator	350-2034

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#### MEMBER OF:

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- Nursery Growers of Lake County Ohio
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER:** All Lake SWCD and USDA programs and services are available without regard to race, age, gender, national origin, political beliefs, color, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

The public is invited to attend Lake SWCD's monthly Board meetings, held the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at 125 East Erie St., Painesville. Meeting announcements appear under the public agenda in the News-Herald and on the Lake SWCD website. Please call in advance to let us know you will be attending.

Answers: 1. C 2. D 3. all 4. D, B, E, C, A, F 5. A 6. B 7. B